



## Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation Inc.

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# 2021-2022 Annual Report

## Wominjeka – Welcome

Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we meet and pay our respects to their Elders; past, present and emerging.

### Annual General Meeting

At the online meeting on 20 October 2021, I had the pleasure of inviting Elder Aunty Judith 'Jacko' Jackson to do an Acknowledgement of Country. Following this, reports by myself, as Co-Chair, and Treasurer, Fiona Olney-Fraser, were read and both were moved and accepted by those present. The Executive Committee members - Co-Chairs Rosemary Rule and Dennis Fisher; Treasurer Fiona Olney-Fraser; Secretary Deb Stewart; and Committee Member Jo Bond were unanimously re-elected, and Joy Bandy was also elected. It is with their support, encouragement and hard work that our group continues to be an effective member of the Reconciliation community. The experience and connections this wonderful team bring help to expand our networks and attract new people to become involved with the group, so I'd like to thank each one of you for your ongoing support and encouragement.

Following the elections, we heard from Ian Hamm, a particularly informative and engaging Guest Speaker, who reflected on his childhood, growing up as part of the only Aboriginal family in Yarrawonga, and spoke about some of the various roles he's held in government - Chair of the Board of Directors of the First Nations Foundation, Chair of the Board of the Koorie Heritage Trust and President of the Community Broadcasting Foundation to name a few. Ian painted a promising picture of the future of the Aboriginal Victorian community, how it fits into the wider community and changes in attitudes. Ian was also encouraged by the fact that Victoria is taking the lead in cultural heritage as well as matters relating to truth and a truth-telling commission.

### Activities

A highlight of the past year was the lunch we hosted to commemorate National Sorry Day on 26 May. Among the 90 guests in the South Melbourne Community Centre Hall were representatives from South Port Community Centre, Galiamble, Winja Ulupna, the Salvation Army's Access program, Vincent Crisp Architects, Sacred Heart Mission, Reconciliation Victoria, students from St Michael's Grammar,



Elder Aunty Dyan Summers from the Bunurong Land Council & Aboriginal Corporation performs a Welcome To Country at our 2022 National Sorry Day Lunch.

Councillors Peter Martin, Louise Crawford and Heather Cunsolo. Aunty Dyan Summers, Bunurong Land Council and Aboriginal Corporation Elder, gave a heartfelt Welcome to Country and shared personal stories about her family, which were quite emotional to hear. She prompted entertainer Monica Weightman to also talk candidly about her family and history before singing. Our MC, Dennis Fisher, engaged many of the guests with his cheeky banter, recited some of his poems and invited two students from St Michael's to read one of them, another poignant moment. It felt like a very special lunch, which indeed it was, perhaps the



more so because, due to Covid, it had been two years since the last event. It was quite apparent that people came away the richer for the experience and appreciated the chance to meet and share stories.

Co-Chairs Dennis Fisher and Rosemary Rule with Todd Condie, Council's Indigenous Policy Officer.

### 2022 Reconciliation Writing Competition

A working group was formed to present the 2022 Reconciliation Writing Competition, open to adults and students in Years 9-12. Entries were invited, referencing the NAIDOC Week theme Get Up! Stand Up! Show Up! Judges Associate Professor Jeanine Leane, Creative Writing and Aboriginal Literature at the University of Melbourne, and Bryan Andy, writer, broadcaster and film maker, will choose first, second and third placegetters in each category, to be announced on 14 October 2022.

### Early Learning Centres Project

For the second year running, we have gifted a book to every Early Learning Centre in the City of Port Phillip.

They gratefully received a copy of Fay Stewart-Muir's children's book *Family* along with a useful, updated Resources List, compiled by PPCfR member and ELC teacher Fiona Darroch.

### Networking

As part of activities held during Reconciliation Week, 27 May to 3 June, Dennis Fisher and I were invited to present two talks. The first was to 50 Cadbury sales team members working for parent company Mondelez Australia in South Melbourne; the second for residents of Australian Unity's The Grace Albert Park Community retirement complex.



**Denis Fisher, standing far left, and Rosemary Rule, standing 2nd from right, meet residents of The Grace in Albert Park.**

### Reconciliation Groups

By way of supporting the work of Reconciliation Victoria (RV), on 11 September, I took part in their online forum, inviting local groups to discuss their work, trends and initiatives, and had the chance to mention some of PPCfR's work and involvement in the community. In May, I participated in RV's RAP Leaders in Local Government webinar. Todd Condie, CoPP's Indigenous Policy Officer, was one of the speakers. He offered insights about the work he does on behalf of the Council, finishing with the salient fact that: *"We are only 3% of the population, so we need the other 97% to be on our side and celebrate our culture."*

In support of the other peak body, ANTaR - Australians for Native Title & Reconciliation, I attended their online AGM on 27 November on Social Media Slacktivism: Youth Allyship in the Reconciliation Movement and was encouraged to hear the views younger people expressed. I attended their 10th anniversary celebration in July, hearing passionate speeches from ANTaR's Chair, Richard Frankland, (he also sang) and Sue-Anne Hunter, Deputy Chair of the Yoorrook Justice Commission, among others.

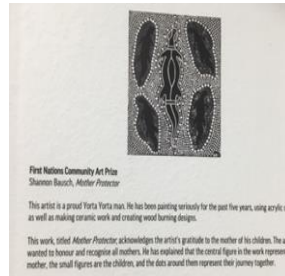
Our group continues to support our friends at Stonnington Reconciliation, regularly reporting their activities in our *Mungo* newsletter and participating in their AGMs and other meetings.

### Initiatives of Change Australian HQ

This worldwide movement of people of diverse cultures and backgrounds is committed to the transformation of society and is currently focused on promoting First Nations history, culture and politics. Among their events I've attended were talks by Thomas Mayor, a signatory to the Statement from the Heart and Voice to Parliament campaigner, who was a knowledgeable and eloquent speaker.

### Linden New Art

Aunty Jacko and I were delighted to announce Shannon Bausch as the winner of the First Nations Community Art Prize supported by PPCfR



for his painting *Mother Protector* at the 2021 Linden Postcard Show held in St Kilda.

### City of Port Phillip (CoPP)

I am very grateful to the Council for their ongoing support in the form of an annual community grant as well as in kind,

and I would like to particularly thank Todd Condie and Jordan Sutardy for always being available to provide help and guidance when asked for as well as for their knowledge, which is immeasurable. The Council presented a range of significant Reconciliation-related activities, such as the memorable We-Akon-Dilinja 'mourning reflection' ceremony, held at 6 am on 26 January, the Yaluk-ut Weelam Ngargee 9-day festival in February and events during Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week. These maintain their connections with First Nations people and culture and, by extension, provide positive role models for other local government bodies.

### Meetings

Due to Covid, our meetings were held via zoom for many months. I'm very grateful to Deb Stewart for so capably hosting them until we were able to meet in person in February this year in a new venue, the South Melbourne Community Centre's Hall 3. What is encouraging is being introduced to so many new people over the past 12 months, and I'm looking forward to their ongoing participation in our activities.

### Mungo and ppcfr.org

I'd like to thank the Member for Albert Park, Martin Foley, and the staff in his electoral office who generously print the newsletter 11 times a year. Thanks also to COPP's Todd Condie for sending out the email versions - always with a personal note - and to Jo Bond for willingly organising the snail mail copies. Thanks also to Nick Margiolakis for maintaining and adding to the ppcfr.org website whenever asked.

### What's Ahead

I'm excited to see what lies ahead! Victoria is leading the way in Treaty-related negotiations, and there's a national groundswell of support for the proposed Referendum on a Voice to Parliament for all Australians, so there will be many opportunities for our group to become engaged and perhaps to be involved in these campaigns, among other relevant issues.

In the meantime, I'd like to again thank the Committee: Dennis, Deb, Fiona, Jo and Joy for all their support. There are many others to also thank, among them Judith 'Jacko' Jackson, Gael Wilson, Fiona Darroch, Sushena Krishnaswamy, Moira Burke, Janine Wilder, Helen Hoffman, Iain Stewart, Helen Bennett, David Jago, Tom Moloney, Judy Dunster, Jim Richardson, Judy Chow-Fairhall, Maureen Walker and Penelope Demos. They along with other members and friends, help ensure that PPCfR remains a vibrant and engaged group, working in the community to promote First Nations people and Reconciliation.

**Rosemary Rule, Co-Chair, 20 September 2022**